

**In the Specification:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 6 and ending on page 6:

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

A preferred embodiment of the present invention is described below with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a top perspective view of an embodiment of the pan protector of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a bottom view of ~~an~~ the embodiment of the pan protector illustrated in Figure 1; and

~~Figure 3 is a top perspective view of an embodiment of the present invention, which illustrates the handle receiving opening at an end of the pan protector; and~~

Figure ~~4~~ 3 is a ~~top~~ bottom perspective view of an embodiment of the present invention, which illustrates the pan protector in use securing a cooking pan placed therein, and which illustrates the handle receiving opening at an end of the pan protector, with the handle of the cooking pan inserted therethrough being shown in broken lines.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 8, and ending on page 8:

The pocket portion 9 is adapted to receive and accommodate a frying or cooking pan placed therein, and is preferably sized so as to be substantially the same as the frying or cooking pan to be placed therein. In addition, to allow access to the interior pocket portion 9 formed as a result of the connection of the front panel 3 and rear panel 5, the pocket portion 9 has an opening 11 thereto, **as illustrated in Figure 2**, which is defined on an outer surface of the pocket portion 9. The opening 11 is adapted to receive the frying or cooking pan to be placed in the pocket portion 9. In the preferred embodiment, an underside of the front panel 3 (when connected to the rear panel 5 so as to form the pocket portion 9 therebetween) will be positioned on top of, or in close proximity to, the upper surface of the pan placed within the pocket portion 9, while an upper surface of the rear panel is positioned near or in contact with an underside of the frying or cooking pan placed within the pocket portion 9. While it is understood that the opening 11 could be placed on either the front panel 3 or rear panel 5 defining the pocket portion 9 therebetween (and which form the top or bottom of the pocket portion 9 of the pan protector 1 of the present invention, respectively), in the preferred embodiment the opening 11 is positioned on the rear panel 5 which forms the bottom of the pocket portion 9. In the preferred embodiment, the rear panel 5 is provided with a transverse opening 11 for the insertion and removal of a frying or cooking pan placed within the pocket portion 9. The opening 11 of the pocket portion 9 is so dimensioned that the frying or cooking pan can be easily sleeved into and removed from the pocket portion 9.

Please amend the first and third paragraphs beginning on page 9 and ending on page 10:

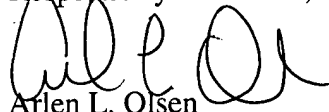
In the preferred embodiment, the rear panel 5 which forms the pocket portion 9 is comprised of two overlapping plies of backing fabric 13, 15, which are each connected to the front panel 3 (or the front face fabric of the pan protector). With reference to Figure 2, it can be seen that the area where the two plies of backing fabric 13, 15 overlap define the opening 11 to the interior pocket portion 9. In fashioning the two overlapping plies 13, 15 of fabric in this manner to form the rear panel 5, a frying or cooking pan can be inserted or removed from the opening 11, and, because the plies of fabric 13, 15 overlap, the pan, when positioned and placed within the pocket portion 9, remains secured and completely covered within the pocket portion 9, **as can be seen with reference to Figure 3.** Alternatively, the rear panel 5 could comprise a non-overlapping single piece of textile material (which is then connected to the front panel 3) having an opening defined therein.

As noted previously, the stitched seam joining the front 3 and rear 5 panels together can be effected along a substantial length of the edge portions 7 thereof. However, in a preferred embodiment, a small area at an end of the pocket 9 is left unsealed, as can be seen with reference to Figure 3, so as to provide a handle receiving opening 17 at an end of the pocket 9, whereby, to accommodate a frying or cooking pan being placed in the pocket portion 9, a handle of the frying or cooking pan can be inserted therethrough. Alternatively, the front 3 and rear 5 panels may be sealed together with a continuous stitch around a full length of the edge portions 7, the handle receiving opening instead being cut and defined in an area on either the front or rear panels. As

noted, the handle receiving opening 17 is provided at one end of the cooking pan protector 1 of the present invention. In this manner, when the frying or cooking pan is to be inserted into the pocket portion 9, the handle of the cooking or frying pan is inserted firstly into the pocket portion 9, whereby a handle of the cooking pan is inserted through the handle receiving opening 17, and the remainder of the frying or cooking pan (or, the body of the pan, containing the cooking surface) can then be accommodated and inserted into the pocket portion 9. Once the handle of the cooking pan has been inserted through the handle receiving opening 17, in placing a cooking pan in the pocket portion 9 in the preferred embodiment, the first ply of fabric 13 is pulled back slightly to reveal the opening 11 to the interior of the pocket portion 9, and a first end of a cooking pan is then inserted into one end of the pocket. Once the first end of the frying or cooking pan is in place, the second ply of fabric 15 is then pulled back, and a second end of the frying or cooking pan is inserted into a second end of the pocket. The first ply of the overlapped fabric 13 is then everted over the second ply of fabric 15 to cover the pan receiving opening 11 to the pocket 9, so as to completely cover and protect the cooking pan placed therein. And, because the plies of fabric 13, 15 overlap, the cooking pan remains secured and covered within the pocket portion 9. Further, and with reference to Figure 4 3, due to the pliability and resiliency of the stretchable material of which the cooking pan protector of the present invention is comprised, in the preferred embodiment, once the frying or cooking pan is entirely in place within the pocket 9, the material will contract around the frying or cooking pan, thus providing a secure protective cover to enclose the frying or cooking pan.

Favorable action constituting allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Arlen L. Olsen', written over the printed name.

Arlen L. Olsen

Reg. No. 37,543

Date: 4-28-2004

**SCHMEISER, OLSEN & WATTS**

3 Lear Jet Lane, Suite 201

Latham, N.Y. 12110

(518) 220-1850